Liberty

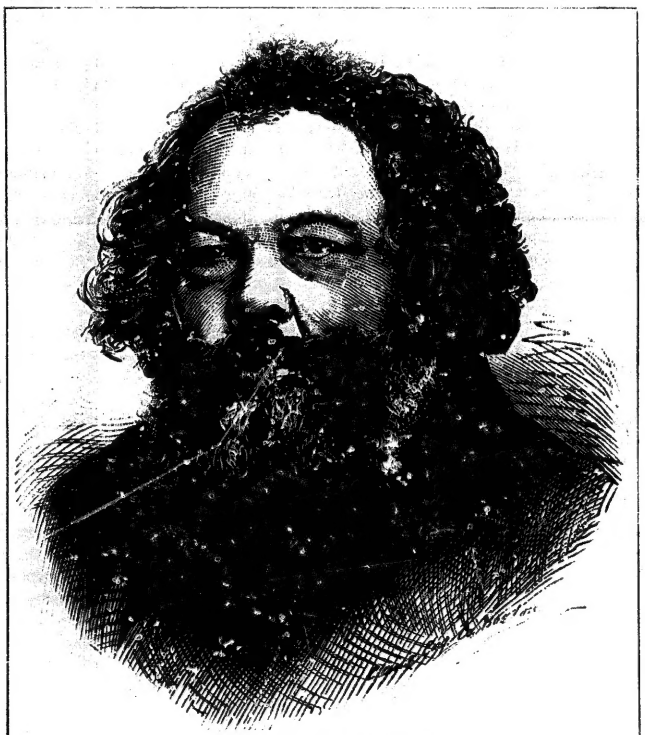
NOT THE DAUGHTER BUT THE MOTHER OF ORDER — PROUDHON

Vol. I. BOSTON, MASS., SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 26, 1881. No. 9.

"For always in thine eyes, O Liberty!
Shines that high light whereby the world is saved;
And though thou slay us, we will trust in thee."
JOHN HAY.

Michael Bakounine.

As announced in our last number, we present on this page, for the first time in America, a faithful portrait of the founder of Nihilism,—the physical lineaments of an heroic reformer, of whom we are willing to hazard the judgment that coming history will yet place him in the very front ranks of the world's great social saviours. The grand head and face speak for themselves regarding the immense energy, lofty character, and innate nobility of the man. We should have esteemed it among the chief honors of our life to have known him personally, and should account it a great piece of good fortune to talk with one who was personally intimate with him and the essence and full meaning of his thought and aspiration. In the absence of any direct knowledge of the man and his own interpretation of his life-work we can do no more than publish a brief sketch of his career, gathered from various German and French writings, with such inferences as appear to us just and natural.



MICHAEL BAKOUNINE:
Russian Revolutionist, Father of Nihilism, and Apostle of Anarchy.

Michael Bakounine was born in 1814 of an ancient aristocratic Russian family. His father was a wealthy proprietor of Torchok in the governmental department of Twer. He was at an early age sent to the cadet school of St. Petersburg, and entered as ensign in the artillery. In that day the artillery branch of military service was one in which the most favored aristocracy were enrolled, and it had always been the traditional policy of the czars to permit greater freedom of thought and research in that branch of the service than in any other. The immunities and privileges there enjoyed corresponded with that license which the German monarchs have always suffered in the universities, and it was there that Bakounine first nurtured the germs of those great revolutionary ideas which were destined to make his life so eventful, so heroic, and so significant in the evolution of sociological drifts.

With a deep yearning to thoroughly master the leading philosophical thought of his time, and having been commissioned as commandant of an obscure and isolated district, he became restless and disgusted, and in 1841 quitted Russia, and took up his abode in Berlin in order to become master of the Hegelian philosophy, which had already seized upon the young students and thinkers of Germany with a bewitching fascination. Here he entered assiduously into the whole realm of philosophy, especially the Hegelian, which he characterized as the "Algebra of Revolution," and visited Dresden, Leipzig, and every other locality where he might exchange thought with the leading progressive spirits of the times. He published numerous philosophical writings over the name of Jules Elisard. In 1843 he visited Paris. Here he became an enthusiastic admirer of Proudhon, who probably seasoned his thought with those anarchistic tendencies that in later days developed his logic into what constitutes the philosophical method of Nihilism, which now appals and confounds despotism and challenges the attention of the whole world.

From Paris he next went to Switzerland, where he remained from 1843 to 1847. Here he entered into the new social movement, being *en rapport* with the Polish exiles. But already he had excited the gravest suspicions on the part of the Russian government, and his *permis* to sojourn abroad was rescinded. Instead of obeying, he returned to Paris, and there delivered a public appeal to the Poles and Russians to unite in a grand Pan-Slavonic revolutionary confederation. At the demand of the czar he was expelled in 1848 from France, and ten thousand rubles were offered for his arrest and return to Russia. But the revolution of February soon brought him back to Paris, which he quitted again, however, for Prague to attend the Congress of Slavs. The following year he went to Dresden, and became one of the chiefs of the May revolution and a member of the insurrectionary government. Forced to fly from Dresden, he was captured, sent to prison, and condemned to be executed in May, 1850. His sentence, however, was commuted to imprisonment for life. Escaping into Austria, he was again captured and again sentenced to death,—this time for high treason. But again his sentence was commuted to perpetual imprisonment. Upon repeated threats and entreaties the Austrian government was constrained to deliver him up to Russia.

As if hardly knowing how to dispose of so dear a prize, he was kept for several years in a dungeon in the fortress of Neva, and finally deported to Siberia. He spent several years in a penal colony, suffering the most cruel hardships, but finally succeeded in escaping from Siberia, a feat which he alone, it is said, ever accomplished. After a journey of one thousand miles, under hardships which approach the miraculous, he reached the sea, and obtained passage to Japan. From there he sailed to California, thence to New York, and in 1860, as if descending from the clouds, Michael Bakounine alighted, like a thunderbolt, in London.

Experiences like those already suffered would have cooled the ardor of most men, but hardly had Bakounine stepped foot in London when he took up his revolutionary schemes with redoubled enthusiasm. He issued numerous addresses to the Poles and Russians to join in a grand revolutionary confederation of Slavs. Associated with Herzen and Ogareff he published a revolutionary sheet called "The Kolokol" (The Bell). But so grand and deep and searching was his philosophy that he led all his co-laborers beyond their depth. The anarchistic philosophy which he had imbibed from Proudhon permeated all his schemes. He was now precipitated into an ever-deepening conflict with the revolutionary socialists of the Karl Marx school. At the great socialist congress in Geneva in 1870 he took direct and positive issue with the governmental wing of the party. He demanded the abolition of the State and all organized "machines" of social and religious administration. At the congress of the International at Hague in 1872 he was expelled, but succeeded in carrying thirty delegates with him, which body of anarchistic radicals finally waxed strong enough to overthrow the International Association, only to reorganize it later (as they did this last summer) under their own direction.

Michael Bakounine now formulated his system of scientific anarchy as fully as his resources would permit. His hope was to crown his life-work by setting in motion a revolution throughout the world, looking to the abolition of the State and the substitution of that natural order which comes of justice, selection, and liberty. His ruling idea was: Given equality of conditions, and organized State and Church become unnecessary. The absence of equality of conditions is due to the existence of the State, and the State alone. Abolish the State! was the banner which he set up to conquer despotism, and erect upon its ruins a reign of true order and natural government. His philosophy and purposes he elaborated in several pamphlets, now very rare, principal among which was one entitled, "Dieu et l'Etat" (God and the State).

Russia, his native country, was the land in which

[Concluded on fourth page.]

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BOSTON, MASS., NOVEMBER 26, 1881.

"A free man is one who enjoys the use of his reason and his faculties; who is neither blinded by passion, nor hindered or driven by oppression, nor deceived by erroneous opinions." — PROUDHON.

Play-House Philanthropy.

Among the ablest and most interesting contributions to the columns of the "Irish World" are the sketches of one of its staff correspondents, "Honorius," in which that writer, week after week, with all the skill and strategy of a born general, marshals anecdote, illustration, history, biography, fact, logic, and the experiences of every-day life in impregnable line of battle, and precipitates them upon the cohorts of organized tyranny and theft, making irreparable breaches in their fortifications, and spreading havoc throughout their ranks. The ingenuity which he displays in utilizing his material and turning everything to the account of his cause is marvellous. Out of each new fact that falls under his notice, out of each new character with whom he comes in contact, he develops some fresh argument against the system of theft that underlies our so-called "civilization," some novel application of the principles that must underlie the coming true society.

Unless we are greatly mistaken, the latest of his assaults will not prove the least effective, since in it he has improved an excellent opportunity to turn his guns upon enemies nearer home, enemies in the guise of friends. He briefly tells the story of the career of a Yorkshire factory-lord, one Sir Titus Salt, who, through his fortunate discovery of the process of manufacturing alpaca cloth, accumulated an enormous fortune, which he expended in the establishment of institutions for the benefit of his employees and in deeds of general philanthropy. To this man he pays a tribute of praise for various virtues, which, for aught we know, is well deserved. But he supplements it by forcible insistance on the fact that Sir Titus was but a thief after all; that, however great his generosity of heart, it was exercised in the distribution of other people's earnings; and that his title to exemption from the condemnation of honest men was no better than that of the more merciful of the Southern slave-owners. The importance of this lesson it is impossible to overestimate. Gains are no less ill-gotten because well-given. Philanthropy cannot palliate plunder. Robbery, though it be not born of rapacity, is robbery still. This Sir Titus Salt but serves as a type of a large class of individuals who are ever winning the applause and admiration of a world too prone to accept benevolence and charity in the stead of justice and righteousness.

Perhaps the most conspicuous example of the class referred to now posing before the world is the man referred to by "Honorius" in connection and comparison with Sir Titus,—Godin of Guise, the famous founder of the *Familisterre*. "The great Godin of Guise," "Honorius" styles him; and it is precisely because this clear-headed writer, misinformed as to the real facts, makes him the object of exaggerated and misplaced adulation that the present article is written. Of Sir Titus Salt we could not speak, but of the *Familisterre* and its founder we can say somewhat that may interest and enlighten their admirers. But first the words of "Honorius:"

> Sir Titus Salt was the companion, as a noble-souled employer, to that fellow-philanthropist, the great Godin of Guise, who founded the famous social palace known as the *Familisterre*, although not so grand a character as the renowned Frenchman. Titus Salt was a sectarian. His $80,000 church was for the "accommodation" of his own sect, and those who held to other creeds found no place of worship from his money. Godin was a grand, liberal soul. Though educated a Catholic, he made the most liberal provision for every shade of belief among his working people, and he despised every form of narrowness and bigotry. Godin, too, was too noble a soul to descend to the arts of the politician, and would have despised himself had he solicited a vote from any of his people. So wonderful was the success of his industrial experiment at Guise that Louis Napoleon became jealous of the possibilities for labor which he had demonstrated, and that despicable fraud and royal scoundrel, "Louis the Little," repeatedly went out of his way to hamper his business, and even sought to disfranchise him.

Let us see how much of this is true,—if this man is really great, or only a pretender and a sham. It was once our privilege to visit the *Familisterre*. The visit extended through the better part of a week, and occurred at a very favorable time, including one of the two annual fête days (celebrating Education and Labor) peculiar to the institution. But the impression left on our mind was by no means favorable. The establishment seemed pervaded throughout by an atmosphere of supervision and routine, tempered here and there by awkward attempts at the picturesque. The air of buoyant contentment which the glowing accounts given of the Social Palace would lead one to expect did not characterize the members of the large household to any great extent. The workmen seemed to feel themselves and their class still the victims of oppression. A very slight acquaintance with them was sufficient to reveal the fact that their "boss" and "benefactor" does not appear as godlike in their eyes as in those that view him at a distance. In the presence of the inquiring observer their faces assumed an expression that seemed to say: "Oh, you think it's all very pretty, no doubt; no rags here, no dirt; everything clean and orderly, and a moderate degree of external comfort among us all. But all this has to be paid for by somebody, and it is the outside world that foots the bills. Our master has the reputation of being very kind and generous, but *he is our master*. We enjoy this material welfare at the expense of something of our independence. Besides, he's got a soft thing of it,—rolling up his millions year by year and excusing himself by distributing a certain proportion of his stealings among us; but he and the rest of us are living very largely on our fellow-laborers elsewhere, out of whose pockets these immense profits come."

And actual questioning proved that their faces told the truth. Inability to converse fluently in French prevented us from inquiring closely into details, but from an intelligent young Russian visiting the place at the same time and on much the same mission as ourselves, whose knowledge of French and English was excellent, we elicited information quite sufficient. The more intelligent of the workmen had told him confidentially just what we had read in their faces as stated above, not a few of them confessing that M. Godin, who at that time was a member of the National Chamber of Deputies, held his seat by a method strikingly similar to that which in Massachusetts the Boston "Herald" is wont to apologize for as "civilized bulldozing,"—that is, prior to election day he contrived to have it understood among his employees that a convenient opportunity would be found for the discharge of such of them as should fail to vote for him, no matter what their previous political affiliations or present political beliefs. And yet "Honorius" says (or seems to hint) that he is not ambitious, and "Honorius" is an honorable man. Hundreds and thousands of honorable men share the same delusion,—for a delusion it certainly is.

A strange sort of "philanthropist," this! A singular "nobility of soul" is M. Godin's! His religious liberality referred to by "Honorius" evidently does not extend into his business and politics. Here is a man, ingenious, shrewd, calculating, with large executive capacity and something of a taste for philosophy, who discovers an industrial process which, through a monopoly guaranteed by the patent laws, he is enabled to carry on at an enormous profit; he employs hundreds of operatives; for them and their families he builds a gigantic home, which he dignifies by the name of a palace, though it needs but a few bolts and bars to make it seem more like a prison, so cheerless, formal, and forbidding is its gloomy aspect; he distributes among them a portion of the profits, perhaps to quiet his conscience, perhaps to become noted for fair dealing and philanthropy; the balance—more than sufficient to satisfy the ordinary manufacturer subject to competition—he complacently pockets, putting forth, meanwhile, the ridiculous pretence that he holds this fund as a trustee; finally, knowing nothing of Liberty and Equity and sneering at their defenders, he professes to think that he can regenerate the world by the fanciful and unsound schemes of education that he spends his leisure hours in devising and realizing, supporting them with wealth gained by theft, power gained by indirect bribery and bulldozing, and popularity gained by pretence and humbuggery. Nevertheless, for doing this the whole humanitarian world and not a few hard-headed reformers bow down and worship him. Even clear-sighted "Honorius" heaps honors on his head. But "Honorius" knows, and does not fail to emphasize, the true lesson of the man's life, which is that the impending social revolution has certain fixed principles behind it; that one of these principles is, "Thou shalt not steal;" that any scheme by which a single individual becomes inordinately rich, whether as proprietor or trustee (unless the trust be purely voluntary), is necessarily carried on in violation of that principle; and that whoever prosecutes it as in accordance with that principle thereby proves himself either too ignorant or too insincere to be allowed to serve, much less to lead, in the revolutionary movement. Such a man is of the plunderers, and should be with them. Idol-smashing is no enviable task; but to unmask the pretensions of play-house philanthropists whose highest conception of distributive justice seemes to be the sharing with a fortunate few of goods stolen from the many is a service that, however disagreeable, is of prime necessity in the realization of that Equity which distributes to each the product of his labor and that Liberty which renders it impossible for one to reap the profit of another's toil.

Liberty had in type, and intended to publish in this issue, a communication from the central bureau of information at London reporting the progress and growth of the reorganized International Working-people's Association, and containing a complete list of the groups and sections that have forwarded their adhesions and accepted the platform; but facts have recently transpired that make it dangerous to reveal the existence and location of the French, Italian, and Spanish groups. Therefore, rather than print an incomplete list, we omit it altogether, simply stating that, apart from the numerous sections that prefer to correspond directly with each other, forty-six are in direct communication with the central bureau, working together for the social revolution the world over in harmony substantially complete. The United States is represented by groups located in New York, Jersey City, and Milwaukee. New sections are forming everywhere with great rapidity. The progress of anarchistic socialism in Europe is really wonderful. In Spain, where the working-people are beginning to see the futility of political methods, a recent workingmen's congress declared, by the voice of one hundred and twenty-eight out of one hundred and thirty-six delegates representing two hundred sections, squarely in favor of anarchy.

A valued contributor strongly defends in another column the attitude recently taken by O. B. Frothingham, viewing it from a transcendental standpoint. We are materialists of the most extreme sort, but do not find it necessary to discuss Mr. Frothingham's attitude toward revealed religion as if it were an issue between the experiential and intuitional philosophies. The position of Mr. Frothingham seems to us something like this. Years ago he discovered that the Christian edifice, comfortable as it was, stood

on a rotten foundation, and that its decaying walls were liable at any moment to tumble about his ears. He wisely hastened to abandon it, and proceeded, in company with others (we do not refer especially to the Free Religious Association), to lay the foundations for a more solid structure. They did their work well, and it is now going bravely on. But, as winter approaches, the cold north winds whistle through the bare framework of the Freethought temple, and Mr. Frothingham begins to shiver. So incomplete is the structure as yet that it is impossible to heat it or to furnish it with those comforts and decorations that make a house a home both for body and soul. So Mr. Frothingham leaves his fellow-workmen, brave builders that they are, to toil on in the cold, and goes off blowing his delicate fingers with the breath from his blue nose. He now sits hesitatingly in the sunniest spot that he can find in the open air, wondering whether he would not do better to return to the edifice which he originally abandoned. "I know it is crumbling," we can hear him murmur, "but there is a furnace there at least. Shall I not take the risk?" If he succeeds in withstanding the temptation, there is a bare possibility that, when the Liberal structure is completed, he will again seek admission to enjoy its comforts, or even, when summer comes, ask permission to take a hand in finishing the work. Others may look upon such a course with what favor they can; but to us it seems weak, childish, petulant, cowardly, ignoble, and *faithless*.

A well-dressed, well-behaved woman in Providence was returning to her home at 3 o'clock A.M. The streets being empty, she lighted a cigar, and, as she sped along, watched the curling smoke dissolve in the moonbeams, very much after the manner of a free and independent citizen of the stronger sex. She was quiet and orderly, and went straight along about her business. Suddenly a policeman turned the corner and roughly confronted her. After some impertinent questions, he laid violent hands upon her, and marched her rudely to the station. There she received a second dose of blue-coated rudeness, and, after many insults, was suffered to go, with officious reprimands. The Woman Suffrage Association was sitting in Providence at that time. Its leaders must have seen the item in the papers, and we humbly suggest to Lucy Stone, Mrs. E. B. Chace, and the other disciples of woman's rights that this incident was worth more as a text than all that was offered in behalf of suffrage. No half-way decent man would have molested this lady with her cigar. The voting swindle created these police ruffians and their superiors. The State is the real loafer, and true woman will yet learn not to covet its company or keep it alive with votes.

Mr. W. G. H. Smart is about to issue in pamphlet form an address delivered by him, October 2, before the Transatlantic Land and Labor League of South Boston, entitled "The Social Economic System That Is, and That Is To Be." It will be printed on good paper and arranged in two parts. Dealers and labor organizations, from whom Mr. Smart requests early orders, can obtain the work, at the rate of twenty-five copies for one dollar, or one copy for ten cents, from E. M. Chamberlin, "Echo" Printing Office, Washington Street, Boston, to whom post-office money orders should be made payable. Liberty has little in common with Mr. Smart's fundamental thought, but has no hesitation in endorsing him as a good writer and sincere student, from whose works a discriminating mind may extract much that is valuable.

The congress of State socialists at Chur, Switzerland, which made so much noise in advance, proved a complete fiasco. By the confession of P. J. McGuire, the American delegate, all that it did was to resolve to do better next time. A very commendable resolution!

The despatch from Washington announcing that twelve jurors had been drawn to try Guiteau added that they were "all Christians." Meanwhile Guiteau stoutly declares, as heretofore, that he is not insane, except in the "legal sense,"—that is, in the sense that the plea is simply a lawyer's trick for professional purposes. Now, if twelve Christians can convict Guiteau, they must be frauds. He says that God told him to do the deed, just as He told Abraham to offer up Isaac. The divine command was to him unmistakable. He obeyed it. If he dies at the hands of twelve Christian jurors, he will die a martyr to his faith, while they will go back on theirs. The "gospel train," however, probably will ignore this religious hot box, but the more thoughtful of the passengers are beginning to fear the consequences and may hasten to get off at the next station.

In the critical comments that appeared in our last number upon some recent utterances of George Chainey we were guilty of a misquotation in attributing the phrase "free and equal" to the Declaration of Independence. It occurs instead, as a kind friend has pointed out to us, in the Massachusetts Bill of Rights. We found fault with Mr. Chainey for carelessness concerning facts. Now we "know how it is ourselves," and make public apology for our own carelessness concerning quotations.

"Leaves of Grass."

Liberty has received from the publishers (James R. Osgood & Co., Boston), and joyfully welcomes "Leaves of Grass," the collective title of Walt Whitman's poems. It is a convenient, compact, and tastefully "got up" volume of 382 pages, and contains a number of hitherto unpublished poems, besides those of the earlier editions. "Leaves of Grass" have lost nothing of their original native simplicity, freshness, and vigor from being more carefully arranged and placed in a more artistic, though it may be a more conventional vase. The book will be more readily purchased and read, at any rate; and that is the main point. The titles of some of the poems have been changed, and the table of contents newly arranged and made much more convenient for reference to special passages.

We have not discovered that the book has lost anything of its characteristic outspoken independence, nor that any concession has been made to Mrs. Grundy. It still retains all its naked truthfulness and purity, like its prototype in marble, the Greek Slave.

Walt Whitman is preeminently, above all and before all, the poet of innovation, the poet of change, the poet of growth, the poet of evolution. There is not a drop of stagnant blood in his veins. Every fibre of him quivers with life, energy, and fire. His spirit is at the same time the spirit of content and discontent. He is satisfied with whatever is and as it is — for *to-day*, but not for *to-morrow*, nor that for *any future to-morrow*.

> Urge and urge and urge,
> Always the procreant urge of the world.

That seems to him to be the key-note of the universe.

A study, "By Blue Ontario's Shore," affords a good idea of what he himself considers his mission, and shows how thoroughly one in purpose that mission is with Liberty's. He shall speak for himself from that poem.

By blue Ontario's shore,
As I mused of these warlike days and of peace return'd, and the dead that return no more,
A Phantom gigantic superb, with stern visage accosted me,
Chant me the poem, it said, *that comes from the soul of America,*
Chant me the carol of victory, and strike up the marches of Libertad, marches more powerful yet,
And sing me before you go the song of the throes of Democracy.

The poet, in responding, commences with a striking bit of individual self-assertion, of which we can quote but a few lines:

A Nation announcing itself,
I myself make the only growth by which I can be appreciated,
I reject none, accept all, then reproduce all in my own forms.

We are powerful and tremendous in ourselves,
We are executive in ourselves,
We are sufficient in the variety of ourselves,
We are the most beautiful to ourselves and in ourselves,
Nothing is sinful to us outside of ourselves,
Whatever appears, whatever does not appear, we are beautiful or sinful in ourselves only.

(O mother — O sisters dear!
If we are lost, no victor else has destroy'd us,
It is by ourselves we go down to eternal night.)

Have you thought there could be but a single supreme?
There can be any number of supremes. . . .
All is eligible to all,
All is for individuals, all is for you.

Produce great Persons, the rest follows.

Then comes this attack upon Authority and conservatism:

Piety and Conformity to them that like,
Peace, obesity, allegiance, to them that like,
I am he who tauntingly compels men, women, nations,
Crying, Leap from your seats and contend for your lives;
I am he who walks the States with a barb'd tongue, questioning every one I meet,
Who are you that wanted only to be told what you knew before?

Somewhat changing the theme:

I listened to the Phantom by Ontario's shore,
I heard the voice arising demanding bards,
By them all native and grand, by them alone can these States be fused into the compact organism of a Nation.

To hold men together by paper and seal or by compulsion is no account,
That only holds men together which aggregates all in a living principle, as the hold of the limbs of the body or the fibres of plants.

Of these States the Poet is the equable man,
For the great Idea, the idea of perfect and free individuals,
For that the bard walks in advance, leader of leaders.
The attitude of him cheers up slaves and horrifies foreign despots.

Without extinction is Liberty, without retrograde is Equality,
They live in the feelings of young men and the best women,
(Not for nothing have the indomitable heads of the earth been always ready to fall for Liberty.)

For the great Idea,
That, O my brethren, that is the mission of poets.

A few lines to show what he claims for himself:

Give me the pay I have served for,
Give me to sing the songs of the great Idea, take all the rest.
I have loved the earth, sun, animals, I have despised riches,
Claim'd nothing to myself which I have not carefully claim'd for others on the same terms,
I am willing to wait to be understood by the growth of the taste of myself,
Rejecting none, permitting all.

We must find room for our poet's creed of Individualism, and close therewith our quotations from this remarkable book:

I swear I begin to see the meaning of these things,
It is not the earth, it is not America who is so great,
It is I who am great or to be great, it is you up there, or any one,
It is to walk rapidly through civilizations, governments, theories,
Through poems, pageants, shows, to form individuals,

Underneath all, individuals,
I swear nothing is good to me that ignores individuals,
The only government is that which makes minute of individuals,
The whole theory of the universe is directed unerringly to one single individual — namely to you,
(Talk as you like, he only suits these States whose manners favor the audacity and sublime turbulence of the States,)
Underneath the lessons of things, spirits, Nature, governments, ownerships, I swear I perceive other lessons,
Underneath all to me is myself, to you yourself, (the same monotonous old song.)

I am for those who have never been master'd,
For men and women whose tempers have never been master'd,
For those whom laws, theories, conventions, can never master.
I am for those who walk abreast the whole earth,
Who inaugurate one to inaugurate all.

I will not be out-faced by irrational things,
I will penetrate what it is in them that is sarcastic upon me,
I will make cities and civilizations defer to me,
This is what I have learn't from America — it is the amount, and it I teach again.

(Democracy, while weapons were everywhere aim'd at your breast,
I saw you serenely give birth to immortal children, saw in dreams your dilating form,
Saw you with spreading mantle covering the world.)

I will confront these shows of the day and night,
I will know if I am to be less than they,
I will see if I am not as majestic as they,
I will see if I am not as subtle and real as they,
I will see if I am to be less generous than they,
I will see if I have no meaning, while the houses and ships have meaning,
I will see if the fishes and birds are to be enough for themselves, and I am not to be enough for myself.

Attention, "Apex"!

MY DEAR MR. TUCKER,—Allow me just to say that "APEX" is in error in supposing he has answered my question. It appears by his own comment that his "Yes" means that the plough-lender is entitled to pay for the wear *and tear* of the plough. I asked: Is he entitled to pay for its use? I marvel that he should overlook the distinction, for I had been careful to mark it in my first statement. When the question as I put it is answered in the affirmative, I shall be ready to answer the other, "What of it?" But I am still left to the mournful impression that my question is not answered.

Yours cordially,

J. M. L. BABCOCK.

There is more saving grace in one sot shouting "Free rum!" from the gutter, than in acres of prohibitory priests, scholars, and scientists.—*Princeton Word.*

Michael Bakounine.

[Concluded from first page.]

he sought to inaugurate the grand revolution. The result is seen to-day in Nihilism, of which he is the father. Though the flippant, self-sufficient *literati* of the world may call Michael Bakounine a mad fanatic and visionary, there is one man who sees method in his madness, if not a wisdom akin to his sublime heroism. That man is the czar. Michael Bakounine has doomed the czardom, if not imperialism throughout Europe. His soul is marching on, and his ideas, baptized in living martyrdom, are a terror to all despots, though they may feign ignorance of him.

With hands and heart and brain full of revolutionary material, our hero died at Borne, Switzerland, in 1876. Even a tame sketch of his sufferings and adventures in the cause of liberty would make a tale alike touching and sublime. For several years of his life he was practically outlawed in every land on the planet he sought to redeem. No country would recognize him in a passport, even had he dared to ask for one. He was a refugee and an exile from every land. Despotism had standing rewards for his body. He was early disowned by his family, although his name figures among some of the chief officers near the Russian court to-day. The executioner stood waiting for him in several countries. He was everywhere tracked by spies and detectives. He dared not expose his name on the continent outside of Switzerland. He has no biographer, no authoritative defender, and possibly no authenticated grave. But his thought lives after him, and to the new world of Liberty, Justice, Peace, and Love, to establish which he suffered and died, remains the honor of doing his memory the justice denied him while living. Liberty is not afraid to honor him, being assured that posterity will yet search out his lonely resting-place and bear him from it aloft among the great founders of the new heavens and the new earth.

Usury.

Paying money for the use of money is a great and barbarous wrong. It is also a stupendous absurdity. No one man can use money. The use of money involves its transfer from one to another. Therefore, as no one man can use money, it cannot be right and proper for any man to pay for the use of that which he cannot use. The people do use money; consequently, they should pay whatever the money may cost.

Money is necessarily a thing which belongs to society. This is one of the great truths of civilization which has been generally overlooked. For this whole question of the rightfulness of interest turns on the question, "What is money?" So long as the people shall continue to consider money as a thing of itself objectively,—why, there is no hope for humanity.

All wealth is the product of labor, but no labor can produce money. There can be no money until some wealth has been produced, because money is a representative of wealth.

Money is a form of credit,—credit in circulation. It is not a thing of substance. The great object of money is to exchange values. Now value is an idea, and money is used to represent, count, and exchange values. The symbol or token of money is not the money itself. Therefore, as money is not a thing of substance, and cannot wear out, it is and ever must be a great wrong and an utter absurdity to give wealth for the use of an idea.

In equity compensation implies service or labor, and as money does not cost labor, why, labor cannot justly be demanded for its use.

But let us look at it practically. The people use money; the people furnish the money; and, if the cost of issue is paid, there can be no other expense. The great difficulty touching this whole matter is a barbarous misconception of the nature of money and a more barbarous disposition to monopolize power and rob the weak. For—let us ask—who pays the great tax of interest? Not those who have and handle the money; not those who use the money; but the poor, the weak, the ignorant, the dupes of the ruling class. We can illustrate this by a fact of to-day. If five or more men having one hundred thousand dollars, *and no more*, organize and establish a national bank, just so soon as their bank is in operation they have the use and income of one hundred and ninety thousand dollars. Now, is it not clear that, this company having got ninety thousand dollars for nothing, somebody has lost that amount? For, if one man gets a dollar that he has not earned, some other man has earned a dollar that he has not got. That is as certain as that two and two make four.

If all men could use their own credit in the form of money, there could be no such thing as interest. Yet, to put this idea into practice, there must be organization and consolidation of credit. Commercial credit, to be good, must be known to be good. A man's credit may be good to the extent of a thousand dollars, but, that fact not being generally known, he must, as things are, exchange his credit for that which is known to be good, and pay a monopoly price for the privilege of using his own credit in the form of money.

Let us remember that no man can borrow money, as a good business transaction, under any system, unless he has the required security to make the lender whole in case he should lose the money. What a stupendous wrong is this,—that a man having credit cannot use it, but must exchange it and pay a monopoly price, which is really for the privilege of using his own credit!

And again, he cannot pay this himself, but must compel the poor man to work out this tax; the latter must pay this interest in the enhanced price of goods. I wonder if the people will always be thus blind and stupid!

So long as business men, as such, and laborers shall continue to permit the few shrewd moneyed men to monopolize commercial credit,—that is, money,—just so long will it be hard times for business and labor. What we want now is the organization of credit on a just and equal plan. William B. Greene solved this whole matter and summed it up in two words: "MUTUAL BANKING." That is what we want.

APEX.

Mr. Frothingham's Defection.

[For Liberty.]

Free Religion may put on mourning now. Its ex-chief, if he has not fallen, has had his mind greatly shaken, and knows not but he must beat a retreat to the shades whence twenty years ago intellectually he emerged. "I do not want to give the impression," he is reported as saying, "that I recant anything. I simply stop denying, and wait for more light." I am not surprised to find Mr. Frothingham at this point of doubting, for, though I believe him always perfectly sincere, it has ever seemed to me that his natural frame of mind could be best imaged by a doubt. He *doubted* "revealed religion." He pleaded for the "Religion of Humanity." But his plea never leaped forth like an irresistible conviction. It sounded like what the old Christian writers called an "apology,"—an apology for his doubt. It was an argument: an intellectual stating, a lawyer-like presenting of his case,—his case against the old supernatural faith. Always well done; strong, classical, rhetorical, elegant; but not stirring one with more than a keen intellectual appreciation. "I always feel cold chills run down my back when ——— speaks," once said an acquaintance of mine; "and when that happens, I know my soul is coming up to fever heat." But it was not Mr. Frothingham's discourse that produced in my friend's soul these responding fever heats. Yet, it can be truly said that few men have made clearer statements of what has been termed the Radical, or Liberal, position than has Mr. Frothingham. He has done great service, and there are hundreds, if not thousands, who would earnestly confess that he had been a real helper to them. He helped, as we have indicated, in resolving their doubts,—placing the weight of *argument* to the doubter's side. But to quicken the believer in his belief, clearing away the contentious intellectualisms that intervene between the universe of spiritualities and the soul's vision by spontaneous spiritual affirmations which no soul could or would gainsay,—that function of the great teacher, or quickener, he did not, in any marked degree, possess. He was not, however, without that side of human nature. Especially in his private conversation, when controversy or advocacy did not come to the front, he would manifest a reserve transcendental power which not alone surprised the listener, but suggested that Mr. Frothingham was probably the "coming man." But this suggestion was not to be realized. The view of the intellectual doubter was too habitual with him. He must leave his own direct vision for the reconstruction of old visions or old beliefs. Not contented with what he himself could believe, he must enter the arena of debate, and rid the world, by force of new arguments and profounder statements, of *its* errors. The "situation" had a charm he could not resist. How Free Religion stood; how much headway it made from year to year; how the old faith was affected by it, and what might be the next step,—all these considerations came up for him as for the others; he and they came consciously to regard themselves as a part of a movement in history, and were ever busy about the "logic" of it; unrestful with their ideas, unless they could also be making themselves felt as a power in the Republic, shaping events.

Finally, some two years ago, it came to pass that Mr. Frothingham felt the stress of a *new* departure so strongly that he retired from his old associations and sought to regain himself in the quiet of foreign travel. He did well; and, if the report of the result, as given by an interviewer to the press, be correct, he has, in our opinion, made a decided gain upon the free religious past which he had forsaken. What Mr. Frothingham now more clearly sees is the fact that there is something in human experience corresponding to what the Christian world has proclaimed as "revealed religion." He sees or feels that the materialistic religion coming to the front has only the intellectual basis which closes up the channels of the spirit whose in-coming into human experience is all that keeps human life fresh, progressive, and, in any true sense, alive. When he left New York two years ago, he announced that his ministrations from the transcendental, or individualistic, standpoint were at an end. He looked for no further progress, save in the beneficent aids of social, scientific organization. It was his lapse into those materialistic moods which have more or less overtaken nearly all the liberal leaders. To-day he turns his face toward "revelation," which is simply a word that stands for the so-called orthodox interpretation of the soul's proclamation. As the Christian world has understood (or misunderstood) the great fact of the soul's revelation of itself, the world is limited to an individualism of a past age. Peter, Paul, and Jesus had revelations from the soul, but no individual to-day may assume any such importance. This limitation is the Christian's misapprehension, the truth being that all ages and all individuals may leave this open door for the soul's entrance. Undoubtedly Mr. Frothingham saw in the Catholic clergy a certain "power behind them which must mystify the philosophers," especially those whose life is led by speculations of the materialistic brain. These Catholics have at least some portions of the soul's revelation by inheritance. Had they that which might and would come to them separately as individuals were they disconnected from organized tyranny, the mysterious power Mr. Frothingham speaks of would not lessen, but increase.

Mr. Frothingham's purpose to stop denying and wait for more light is a good one. He can well afford now to let "Evangelical religion" alone: neither concern himself with its errors or its truths, nor be oppressed or elated by its strength or weakness. Its churches may or may not be filled, — what is that to a man who is conscious of his own spiritual health? For, though the light that is in him be at ebb, if he will in truth "wait," it will come again at flood. But, if he forsakes the Free Religious organization to run after other organizations, to hear their dissertations of "revealed religion," he will cease to be loyal to his purpose. There is a difference between *waiting* and *going after* light. In our judgment Mr. Frothingham's greatest failure in the twenty years of his ministry was his unsteady reliance on the revelations of his own soul. His waiting may restore his faith therein, and clothe him with power as from on High. * * *

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